

1 Q. I see. And during this time, you had
2 people working for you, you had a budget to
3 maintain and this sort of thing, is that correct?

4 A. Yes, that's true.

5 Q. What brought you to the cellular
6 business?

7 A. Well, I do a lot of reading and I had
8 read about how great that the cellular telephone
9 was going to be and one time a broker called me
10 up and wanted to sell me some stock. And I told
11 him that if I was to buy any stock, it would be
12 with some company that was in the cellular
13 telephone industry. And he said that's quite a
14 coincidence. He said, my company has just
15 obtained permission to sell applications for the
16 FCC lottery that's going to be held. And it
17 ended up that I applied to him for an
18 application. I put in my application for the
19 lottery and that's how I got involved in the
20 cellular telephone business.

21 Q. And when you joined the lottery, was it
22 your intention to own and operate a cellular
23 system, if you won?

24 A. Yes, that was what it was intended for.

25 Q. Now, what was your occupation before

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1 you got into the cellular business?

2 A. I was a welder and mechanic for the
3 city of Portland, Oregon for ten years prior to
4 this.

5 Q. And before that you had been in the
6 garage business, is that correct?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Are you familiar with Amcell
9 Corporation?

10 A. Yes, I am.

11 Q. And do you have a relationship with
12 Amcell Corporation?

13 A. I did have a relationship. They were
14 bought out by Comcast. But prior to their being
15 bought, why, then I had business relations with
16 them, yes.

17 Q. And was this pursuant to a contract?

18 A. Yes.

19 MR. REIDELER: I would like to have
20 this document labeled Ellis Thompson 1, please.

21 (Ellis Thompson Exhibit
22 No. 1 was marked
23 for identification.)

24 BY MR. REIDELER:

25 Q. Do you recognize this document,

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1 Mr. Thompson?

2 A. Yes, I do.

3 Q. This is a management contract that you
4 formed with Amcell, is that correct?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And that was to manage your cellular
7 system in Atlantic City, is that correct?

8 A. Construct and manage, yes.

9 Q. Was it your decision to enter into this
10 contract?

11 A. Yes. Yes, it seemed the logical thing
12 to do.

13 Q. Were you instrumental in negotiating
14 the terms of this contract?

15 A. Only through my attorney.

16 Q. That would be Mr. Lokting?

17 A. Mr. Lokting, David Lokting.

18 Q. But he did the negotiations on your
19 behalf, is that correct?

20 A. Well, yes, that's true.

21 Q. Are you generally satisfied with the
22 terms of the contract?

23 A. Yes, very much so.

24 Q. Pursuant to the contract, is Amcell's
25 management subject to your oversight?

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1 A. Yes, it is, definitely.

2 Q. And if you're not happy with the way
3 the company is being managed, do you have any
4 recourse?

5 A. Yes. If I became dissatisfied with
6 their management, I have the power to discontinue
7 the contract and seek another management team.

8 Q. But you felt there was no need to do
9 that, is that correct?

10 A. There has been no need.

11 Q. Prior to the contract with Amcell, did
12 you have a contract with Telephone & Data
13 Systems, Inc.

14 A. Yes, I did.

15 Q. And did that meet your satisfaction?

16 A. No.

17 Q. And did you terminate that contract?

18 A. If I remember correctly, it was
19 nullified by the courts.

20 Q. But what led up to the nullification?
21 Am I correct in assuming it was your
22 dissatisfaction with the terms?

23 A. Yes, I was dissatisfied with it.

24 Q. And that was your decision?

25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Thank you.

2 EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR
3 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
4 BY MR. WEBER:

5 Q. You stated a broker called you about
6 investments and you mentioned cellular and he
7 said his firm was preparing cellular
8 applications. Who was the broker? Or if you can
9 remember the company.

10 A. That was a long time ago and I don't
11 remember the man's name. I think I have it in
12 the back of my head but I can't tell you who he
13 was right now.

14 Q. Can you recall what he told you about
15 the Commission's applications process, or if he
16 told you anything at all?

17 A. Well, to start with, it was news to me
18 that there was even a lottery being conducted.
19 And he did tell me that by putting up the fee for
20 the application that my application would be
21 entered in the lottery.

22 Q. Do you recall how many different
23 lotteries you entered?

24 A. I believe my application was for three
25 different cities.

1 Q. Did you discuss alliances with him
2 before entering the lotteries?

3 A. I don't recall having discussed any
4 alliances with him.

5 Q. Do you know what I mean by the term
6 "alliances"?

7 A. Yes, I do.

8 MR. WEBER: That's all I have for
9 background.

10 EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR
11 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
12 BY MR. REIDELER:

13 Q. Mr. Thompson, does Amcell charge you a
14 fee for management of the Atlantic City system?

15 A. Yes, they charge a fee for that.

16 Q. Does the fee vary? Is it a fixed fee
17 or does it vary yearly?

18 A. It varies.

19 Q. Is it based on revenues from the
20 system?

21 A. Yes, it is.

22 Q. And have you always been content with
23 the fees that you're paying Amcell?

24 A. Not totally satisfied, no.

25 Q. And have the fees ever been reduced?

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1 A. Yes, they have.

2 Q. And was that at your insistence?

3 A. Yes. I expressed dissatisfaction with
4 the amount that they were receiving from the
5 system.

6 Q. And they in turn reduced the amount
7 charged, is that correct?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Although Amcell manages your system, do
10 you direct its policy?

11 A. I have oversight and control of
12 expenditures and any improvements to the system.

13 Q. Are major policy decisions generally
14 made at Ellis Thompson Corporation's quarterly
15 meetings?

16 A. Most generally anything that comes up
17 of a major nature, we discuss it at the quarterly
18 meetings.

19 Q. Is your approval required for the
20 system's capital expenditures?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And sometimes you feel these
23 expenditures are too high?

24 A. That's true.

25 Q. And have they ever been reduced?

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1 A. The term "reduced" --

2 Q. Or lowered.

3 A. Sometimes I have not approved of their
4 suggestions for perhaps a new cell site.

5 Q. Perhaps that's what I meant is the
6 suggested expenditures. Have they always met
7 your approval?

8 A. No, they haven't.

9 Q. And because they didn't, they were
10 modified at your insistence?

11 A. Modified or put in abeyance.

12 Q. Is your approval required for the
13 operating budget of the system?

14 A. Yes, it is.

15 Q. And have you ever demanded revisions of
16 the operating budget?

17 A. Yes, I have.

18 Q. And has the budget been modified
19 pursuant to your demands?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Now, do you set guidelines on how much
22 and by whom expenses will be paid within the
23 system?

24 A. Would you repeat that, please?

25 Q. Do you set guidelines on how much and

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1 by whom the Ellis Thompson expenses will be paid,
2 what personnel?

3 MR. LARSON: Are you talking about
4 checks or who they can pay it to?

5 MR. REIDELER: Amounts and -- let me
6 rephrase this.

7 BY MR. REIDELER:

8 Q. I'm concerned about amounts of the
9 checks and who has responsibility for writing the
10 checks and to whom these checks will be paid. I
11 assume that some people can only pay checks to
12 certain organizations and other people pay them
13 to other organizations, is that correct?

14 A. That's true. The checks are originated
15 by the management people and anything over \$5,000
16 has to be brought to my attention and the check
17 would have to be signed by me, plus two other
18 people.

19 Q. Has this policy been formally spelled
20 out? Has it been put in writing?

21 A. Yes.

22 MR. REIDELER: I would like this
23 document identified as Ellis Thompson 2, please.

24

25

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1 (Ellis Thompson Exhibit
2 No. 2 was marked
3 for identification.)

4 BY MR. REIDELER:

5 Q. Mr. Thompson, are you familiar with
6 this document?

7 A. Yes, I am.

8 Q. And this is a three-page document
9 headed Policy Statement, is that correct?

10 A. That's true.

11 Q. And does this set out the guidelines
12 that we talked about?

13 A. Yes, it does.

14 Q. And has this policy statement ever been
15 revised, if you recall?

16 A. Well, this is a little confusing. We
17 made a revision --

18 Q. This is dated December 18th, 1989, so I
19 assume it's --

20 A. Yes, it's been revised.

21 Q. You probably did it early on.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And were the revisions pursuant to your
24 orders?

25 A. It was a request from the management

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1 people due to the fact that the agents required
2 more speedy payment than what could be arrived at
3 by sending the checks to Portland and for my
4 okay. So we revised it to where they could write
5 the checks in order to expedite the paying of
6 these people.

7 Q. But it was you that ultimately decided
8 that this was the way it would be, is that
9 correct?

10 A. Yes, that's true.

11 Q. And has it worked out fairly well?

12 A. It's worked out very well, yes.

13 Q. Now, as the president and sole
14 shareholder of Ellis Thompson Corporation, do you
15 decide the terms and conditions of all service
16 contracts? I should say ultimately decides.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. All roamer contracts?

19 A. They are all brought to my attention
20 and I approval of them, yes.

21 Q. All resale contracts?

22 A. Are you referring to resellers?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. We don't have any resellers on the
25 system at this time.

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1 Q. Have you ever had resellers?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And the contracts that were provided to
4 these resellers, were they done -- did you have
5 authority over those contracts?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Now, the provisions and terms of these
8 contracts, did they vary from what was
9 recommended by Amcell, if you recall?

10 A. Well, I don't recall exactly. It seems
11 they were pretty much of a standard contract.

12 Q. I see. But if you wanted to put your
13 own spin on the contract, you would have that
14 authority to do it?

15 A. I would have been able to revise it,
16 yes.

17 Q. Do you decide what rates will be for
18 the various services?

19 A. The rates are established by a division
20 that sees to it that the system has comparable
21 rates with our competitors.

22 Q. Now, this decision that sets the rates,
23 do they provide these to you for approval?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So they work it up and you give it a

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1 yea or nay, is that correct?

2 A. That's the way it is.

3 Q. And how about if the rates were
4 changed, would it be the same situation?

5 A. Yes, if the rates increase or decrease
6 or whatever, it has to meet my approval.

7 Q. Have you ever differed with what was
8 recommended? Have you had a different opinion as
9 to whether the rates were proper or not?

10 A. To the best of my recollection, I don't
11 think I've had reason to disagree with their
12 recommendations.

13 Q. Now, you charge an activation fee, is
14 that correct?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And do you determine what that
17 activation fee will be as well as the rates?

18 A. I don't determine what it's going to
19 be. I have an oversight over it but the people
20 that know about those things and are able to
21 compare with other systems, then they present it
22 to me and I decide whether it's a feasible way to
23 go or not.

24 Q. Is it my understanding that the system
25 is marketed under the title Cellular One, is that

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1 correct?

2 A. Yes, that's true.

3 Q. And was this your decision to use that
4 title?

5 A. It was suggested to me and I approved
6 of it.

7 Q. You thought it was a good idea?

8 A. A good idea.

9 Q. Has it turned out to be a pretty good
10 idea?

11 A. It has, yes.

12 Q. Now, does the system have hand-off
13 agreements with other cellular licensees?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And were these agreements put before
16 you?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And did you approve of them?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Suppose someone in Amcell recommended
21 that you expand the system and add new cells,
22 would it require your authorization to do that?

23 A. It definitely would, yes.

24 Q. Have you given that authorization
25 before?

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1 A. No.

2 Q. Have you ever denied that
3 authorization?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Back to an engineering question, do you
6 decide what type of equipment will be used at the
7 system?

8 A. Right from the start it was decided to
9 use Motorola equipment. That's the equipment
10 that we have used exclusively since the system
11 started.

12 Q. Were you presented any alternative
13 types of equipment or manufacturers?

14 A. I never delved into other types of
15 equipment due to the fact that Motorola is
16 compatible with the other adjoining systems in
17 the area.

18 Q. And your decision was based on that, is
19 that correct?

20 A. That's true.

21 Q. Is it you who ultimately decides where
22 the facilities will be located?

23 A. I don't decide where the location is
24 going to be, no.

25 Q. Are new locations recommended to you?

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And do you decide whether or not to
3 take those recommendations?

4 A. I base my judgment about that on the
5 expertise of the engineering department and the
6 management team; and when they present me with a
7 suggestion of a location and the reasons for it,
8 I take that under advisement. And so far it's
9 always been feasible and I've agreed to it.

10 Q. And do you normally demand some sort of
11 explanation of why this was recommended?

12 A. Definitely, yes.

13 Q. Is it you who ultimately decides
14 whether to rent or buy a site?

15 A. Yes, that's my decision.

16 Q. Have you been presented with -- have
17 you ever been presented with that question,
18 whether or not we should buy or rent a site?

19 A. It's never been suggested to me that a
20 site be bought but I have on at least one
21 occasion suggested that we buy the site rather
22 than to lease it.

23 Q. And did you change your mind?

24 A. I changed my mind after it was pointed
25 out that that wasn't a feasible thing to do.

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1 Q. And you think this was a reasonable
2 decision on your part?

3 A. It's definitely my decision to decide
4 on that, yes.

5 Q. You looked at the alternatives and this
6 in fact seemed to be the wisest choice?

7 A. That's what I base my judgment on,
8 almost everything pertaining to engineering.

9 Q. Does Ellis Thompson Corporation own its
10 own switch?

11 A. No.

12 Q. It rents the switch, is that correct?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Did you ever consider purchasing a
15 switch?

16 A. I have contemplated that but we never
17 did.

18 Q. Do you know why you didn't purchase?

19 A. Well, there again, I based my decision
20 on the judgment and advice of the management
21 people. The sharing of the switch was the best
22 way to go.

23 MR. REIDELER: Joe, do you have any
24 questions?

25 MR. WEBER: Yes.

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1 EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR
2 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
3 BY MR. WEBER:

4 Q. Upon being selected in the Atlantic
5 City market, having your application selected,
6 did you do anything to learn more about cellular?

7 A. Well, I read a lot about cellular but
8 actually, I didn't attend any school or anything
9 of that nature, no.

10 Q. I don't even know if there is such a
11 thing as a cellular school.

12 A. I don't either.

13 Q. Do you at this point feel comfortable
14 with the terminology in cellular? Do you feel
15 like you know the industry with some level of
16 comfort?

17 A. Yes, I think that I have become quite
18 knowledgeable about it over the years.

19 Q. Mr. Reideler asked you briefly about
20 the capital budget. Can you tell me how a budget
21 is presented to you, how Comcast will propose a
22 budget?

23 A. Yes. The various departments, like the
24 engineering department and so forth, they put
25 their needs and so forth into -- you might say a

1 pool of knowledge and they draft the budget
2 according to the needs of the various
3 departments.

4 Q. Are you given a line-by-line budget as
5 opposed to just a total dollar amount?

6 A. It's a line-to-line.

7 Q. And you have the authority to object to
8 individual lines of the overall budget?

9 A. Definitely, yes.

10 Q. What happens when you do object to a
11 given expenditure?

12 A. Well, then the issue is discussed and
13 they have to verify the need for such an item or
14 whatever and if they can justify it, then I okay
15 it. If not, then it's reviewed or eliminated
16 entirely.

17 MR. WEBER: That's all I have on policy
18 matters.

19 EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR
20 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

21 BY MR. REIDELER:

22 Q. Mr. Thompson, am I correct in assuming
23 that you come to Philadelphia approximately four
24 times a year, is that correct?

25 A. Most generally four times.

1 Q. And is this for the Ellis Thompson
2 Corporation quarterly meetings?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And when you do come to Philadelphia,
5 do you visit the system in Atlantic City at that
6 time?

7 A. Not always, no.

8 Q. Approximately how many times do you
9 visit the system during the year?

10 A. If I remember correctly, I've visited
11 three times over the years.

12 Q. Now, when the system was first being
13 constructed and put on line, were your visits
14 more frequent at that time?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And I take it that once it was a going
17 concern, you felt there wasn't that much of a
18 need to go to the facilities, is that correct?

19 A. I would say that, yes.

20 Q. You could get most of the information
21 you needed right from the corporate officers in
22 Philadelphia?

23 A. Yes, keep in close touch that way.

24 Q. Does it take many people to operate
25 these facilities?

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1 A. Are you talking about the cell sites?

2 Q. I'm talking about the Atlantic City
3 facilities, the cell sites, yes.

4 A. There isn't any personnel at the sites
5 themselves.

6 Q. Would it be correct in characterizing
7 these cell sites as consisting of a tower and a
8 shed with some equipment in it?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. A shed that's locked?

11 A. Yes. It's an installation fenced in
12 with a building and a tower, yes.

13 Q. And there is no attending personnel?

14 A. No. There is a technician on call in
15 case any outage occurs or something of that
16 nature, why, he's available to correct it.

17 Q. And where is he located?

18 A. I don't know where his headquarters
19 is. Probably in the Wilmington office, I would
20 say.

21 Q. Do you have any other -- besides the
22 cell sites, are there any other facilities
23 located in Atlantic City?

24 A. We have a retail store. It's not
25 exactly in Atlantic City. It's in Pleasantville.

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1 Q. Is that a suburb of Atlantic City?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. On your visits, do you stop by the
4 retail store?

5 A. I've been there on occasion, yes.

6 Q. Am I correct in assuming that the
7 Atlantic system is operated out of Wilmington, is
8 that correct?

9 A. That's where the management people have
10 their headquarters.

11 Q. Is that where the switch is located?

12 A. That's where the switch is located.

13 Q. Now, on your visits, do you visit
14 Wilmington as well?

15 A. Yes, I've been there on occasion.

16 Q. On your visits to Atlantic City and
17 Wilmington, have you ever been denied access to
18 any of the facilities?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Now, suppose you were there and you
21 really wanted to roll up your sleeves and do
22 something, is there anything you could do at
23 these facilities?

24 A. There isn't anything that I would have
25 the technical knowledge to do.

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1 Q. The only thing you could do is probably
2 do damage, is that correct?

3 A. There would probably be a big blackout
4 of cellular service.

5 Q. When you visit Atlantic City, are there
6 other reasons for your visit other than going
7 around and looking at existing cell sites? Do
8 you, for instance, investigate possible new sites
9 or other areas such as that?

10 A. No. I wouldn't have any expertise in
11 choosing a cell site or anything like that, no.

12 Q. Would it be to inspect a possible site
13 that had been recommended by some of the
14 engineering staff?

15 A. That has been -- I've done that on
16 occasion, yes.

17 MR. REIDELER: Joe?

18 MR. WEBER: No questions on use of
19 facilities.

20 BY MR. REIDELER:

21 Q. I would like to go into the day-to-day
22 operations of the facility if I might now.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. Just a little bit of background. You
25 say your home is in Vancouver, is that correct?

1 A. That's true.

2 Q. And Mr. Lokting's firm is in Portland,
3 is that correct?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And Amcell is headquartered in
6 Philadelphia, is that correct?

7 A. Well, Amcell/Comcast.

8 Q. Excuse me, Amcell/Comcast.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And Mr. Feldstein, your communications
11 lawyer, is located here in Washington, D.C.

12 A. Right.

13 Q. Do you have a problem keeping track
14 with all these people being all over the place?

15 A. No, I haven't had any problem in that
16 regard.

17 Q. Have you ever considered moving to
18 Atlantic City to keep a closer eye on your
19 assets?

20 A. Well, that entered my mind but I never
21 did so.

22 Q. Did you consult Mr. Lokting on this
23 matter?

24 A. I conferred with him about it and he
25 failed to find any necessity for doing so and so

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1 I never did.

2 Q. So you recommended that you not move to
3 Atlantic City?

4 A. That's true.

5 Q. There was no need for you to be here?

6 A. There was no definite reason for my
7 being here.

8 Q. That you could just as well run the
9 company from Vancouver?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Has this generally worked well?

12 A. It's worked very well.

13 Q. And this is at least partly because the
14 system is virtually a no-hands operation, is that
15 correct? It requires no hands-on attention?

16 A. Well, I wouldn't say that it didn't
17 require hands-on attention but it is -- the
18 management team is very capable and the system
19 itself is run pretty much automatically
20 electronically. So, therefore, I can manage it
21 from Vancouver.

22 Q. So could it be just as easily managed
23 from Vancouver or London or Bombay or Tokyo or
24 any place, is that correct?

25 A. Well, of course the further the

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